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THE WORKS OF THE AMERICAN ETCHERS.

XXII.—MRS. ELIZA GREATOREX.



RS. ELIZA GREATOREX was born in Manor-Hamilton, Ireland, the third daughter of the Rev. J. C. Pratt, one of the disciples and immediate followers of John Wesley. In 1840 she came to New York with her family, and for a time seemed inclined to follow a literary career; but she soon resumed painting, which she had already practised in her former home. In 1849 she married Henry W. Greatorex, a well-known musician and organist. Being early left a widow, with three children, she made art her profession, and went to Paris, where she studied under Lambinet for a year. Since then she has visited Europe repeatedly, and during the winter just past extended her travels to Africa. In 1869 she was elected an associate of the National Academy, an honor which at that time only one other woman, Mrs. Bogardus, shared with her.

It was about this time that Mrs. Greatorex began making the pen-and-ink drawings—a series of pictures of *Old New York*—by which she is, perhaps, most widely known. The work was interrupted by a trip to Europe in 1871, which resulted in her *Homes of Oberammergau*, illustrated by her own drawings, reproduced by the Albertotype process. After her return, in 1873, Mrs. Greatorex resumed and completed the *Old New York* series, and, finding inadequate all the methods of reproduction which she had tried, determined to study etching, so as to be able to become her own interpreter. In the winter of 1878–79 she settled in Paris with her daughters, both of whom are artists, and, although still working in color, made etching her chief study. In the summer of last year she went to the valley of the Chevreuse (Seine et Oise), and at Chevreuse and Cernay-la-Ville etched directly from nature. The chief results, thus far, of her work as an etcher are half a dozen plates of the homes of Oberammergau, two of Old New York (*Old Dutch Church, long the Post-Office, and The Battery in Winter*), three of scenery at Chevreuse, three from Cernay-la-Ville (one of which, *The Pond*, is published with this notice), and six or more plates of street scenes, interiors, etc., at Algiers.

The work of Mrs. Greatorex is delicate rather than strong, in its inception as well as in its execution. She has not yet made use of all the resources which the needle and the printing-press place at the command of the etcher, and possibly she does not care to do so. Her long practice with pen-and-ink has made her partial to the necessarily somewhat dry effect of this kind of work, and we have seen that she deliberately devoted herself to etching with a view to reproducing her drawings. Nor is it to be desired that she should abandon her native style for the imitation of methods foreign to her nature. It is precisely this *personal* character of etching, which allows the individuality of the artist full play, that gives it its exceptional value. Of the plates so far executed by Mrs. Greatorex the *Old Dutch Church* is perhaps the most characteristic and attractive. The apparent carelessness in drawing, and the use of all manner of crooked lines in it, which increase the tumble-down aspect of the place, is not only an excusable, but even an admirable piece of artistic calculation. It calls up the spirit of the scene much more vividly to those who were accustomed to its bustle and excitement, than if all the lines of the architecture had been faultlessly drawn with the ruler. If Mrs. Greatorex carries out her *Old New York* in the spirit of this specimen, with such added skill as continued practice will give her, the work will surely be one to be coveted by lovers of art, as well as by antiquarians.

S. R. KOEHLER.

